

# Press Release

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NOAA's National Weather Service Forecast Office  
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## June 16<sup>th</sup> Is Heat Awareness Day in Wisconsin

Governor Jim Doyle has declared June 16<sup>th</sup> Heat Awareness Day in Wisconsin. NOAA's National Weather Service, the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services, and Wisconsin Emergency Management are co-sponsoring Heat Awareness Day in order to alert the public of the hazards associated with extended periods of extreme heat and humidity, and the precautions needed to protect oneself when these conditions exist.

The combination of high heat and humidity can be life-threatening. Each year this deadly combination kills on average 237 people annually (for 10-year period of 1994-2003) in the U.S., making heat the number one weather-related killer.

Across Wisconsin, the heat waves during the summer of 1995 resulted in 154 heat-related deaths. In the summer 2002 heat waves, 15 people died due to heat-related causes.

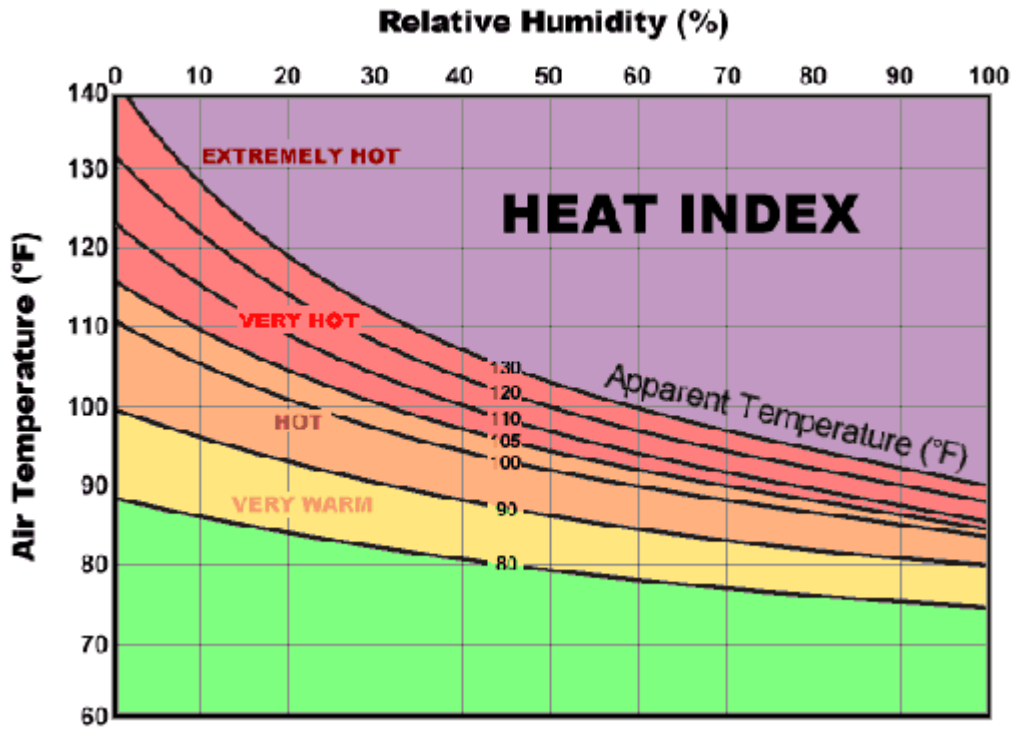
The National Weather Service has a measure of how the hot weather "feels" to the body. The National Weather Service uses the Heat Index (HI) as a way to effectively warn for the combined dangers of heat and humidity. When the (HI) is expected to exceed 110 for 3 hours or more during the day, and remain at or above 80 at night, the National Weather Service in Milwaukee/Sullivan will issue an Excessive Heat Warning, and when the HI's will be from 105 to 110, we will issue a Heat Advisory. These threshold values are only used for 20 counties in south-central and southeast Wisconsin. Other areas of the state have different threshold values. Use the attached charts to see how we find the Heat Index.

If HI values exceed 110 degrees, sunstroke, heat cramps, or heat exhaustion is likely with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.

When Heat Index values rise in south-central and southeast Wisconsin, remember these safety rules:

- Slow down and reduce outdoor activities. If possible, do your activities in the early morning or evening.
- Drink lots of water and stay away from alcoholic drinks.
- Spend time indoors. If you have no air conditioning, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine. Go to a public building where air conditioning is available or take a cool shower or bath.
- Keep in mind that the elderly and small children are especially susceptible to heat. Periodically check them and help them obtain relief from the oppressive heat and humidity.

Check out the NWS's Heat Awareness web page at: [www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/heat/index.shtml)  
In addition, check out the Milwaukee/Sullivan summer weather information page at:  
[www.crh.noaa.gov/mkx/summer\\_page.htm](http://www.crh.noaa.gov/mkx/summer_page.htm)



**How to read the chart** - Follow the temperature line until it intersects the relative humidity line. Then read the Heat Index on the curved line. For example, an air temperature of 100°F and Relative Humidity of 40%. Follow the 100°F temperature line until it intersects the 40% relative humidity line. Then curved line that also intersects is the Heat Index of 110, or Very Hot. That is the temperature the body thinks it is and attempts to compensate for that level of heat. These HI values are for shady locations only. Exposure to full sunshine can increase heat index values by up to 15°F. Also, strong winds, particularly with very hot, dry air, can be extremely hazardous as the wind adds heat to the body. You can add up to 15°F to these values if you are in direct sunlight.

The chart below tells you the risk to the body from continued exposure to the excessive heat.

Category	Classification	Heat Index/ Apparent Temperature (°F)	General Effect on People in High Risk Groups
I	Extremely Hot	130° F or Higher	Heat/sunstroke <b>HIGHLY LIKELY</b> with continued exposure
II	Very Hot	105° F - 130° F	Sunstroke, heat cramps, or heat exhaustion <b>LIKELY</b> , and heatstroke <b>POSSIBLE</b> with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.
III	Hot	90° F - 105° F	Sunstroke, heat cramps, or heat exhaustion <b>POSSIBLE</b> with prolonged exposure and/or activity.
IV	Very Warm	80° F - 90° F	Fatigue <b>POSSIBLE</b> with prolonged exposure and/or physical activity.